

CREATIVITY IN BLOOM

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INTRODUCTION

Are you looking for quick, creative projects for children in grades K-6? Activities that are authentic and economical? Foolproof and fun? Within you'll find a bevy of botanical beauties, a wide variety of playful and educational activities. Celebrate art and a lot more--science, movement, nature and other worthy topics.

Why flowers? One reason is that they are a universal motif, used by cultures throughout time and space--a bridge across centuries and miles. Flowers are classic, enduring symbols.

Too, there is the ever-present concern with ecology. It's my hope that this book will help foster a continuing interest in and respect for the subject. By producing images tied to the earth, sun and water, we reinforce the importance of the natural world. May we learn to appreciate and cherish it.

The floral ideas herein are fresh for picking. Keep in mind, though, that one is not limited to the flowery theme with any of the art projects. They are adaptable as to subject-matter. It is not a huge leap from an exotic orchid to an incredible insect, from a flower's face to a person's. Besides, we must encourage children to find their own new, unique ways of doing things.

Parents and caregivers must value the fresh and unique style of a child's art. They might consider less how a picture looks in the end. Emphasize the joy and the process of creating more than the results. Too, adults must seek out the positive and try to see the richness in a child's drawing or painting. Applaud what is there rather than questioning what isn't.

"I like the way you did this area. Do you want to tell me about it?" Ask questions that are affirming and not leading. Talking about the child's artwork is part of the learning experience, as well as a wonderful way for the child to communicate with others. Through his or her artwork, youngsters gain a wonderful

BREAKFAST FOOD FLOWERS

For Sprouts and Seedlings

An Hour or Under

Use colorful dry cereal for this project. First draw the outline of the head of a large flower on sturdy paper. Then put nontoxic glue inside the outline and place the cereal into it.

You can make pussy willows with cereal, too. You'll need construction paper, puffed rice cereal, glue, and a brown marker. Draw several brown branches on the paper. Glue puffed rice cereal onto the drawn branches for pussy willow blossoms.

Suggestions for Teachers:

Do you have access to actual (dead) tree branches?

An alternative to drawn-on boughs is to glue puffed rice directly to real twigs!

Student Evaluation:

Breakfast Food Flowers

good fair needs improvement

The drawing portion of the assignment has been done neatly and thoroughly.

Glue has been used with care; the finished work is sturdy and tidy.

Let nature be your teacher.

--Wordsworth

DRAWING WITH GLUE

For Budding Artists

Finish the Next Day

There are several ways to create fabulous flowers in low relief using glue. Relief refers to a type of sculpture in which forms project from a surface. Objects in *low relief* are raised from their flat background very little.

Black paper or tagboard, a squeeze bottle of clear glue, and chalk pastels work wonders together. This project might be a good choice for the visually-impaired. The visually-challenged--or anyone--can explore real flowers through the senses of touch and smell, and then "draw" on the dark paper with glue. When the artwork is dry, one can feel the raised glue-lines. Fill inside the shapes and along the edges with colored chalk. Vivid pastels contrast beautifully with shiny lines of glue. When things *contrast*, they are different from each other.

Colored Glue

The clear glue project above is impressive, and here's *another* idea: You can purchase already-colored glue or make it yourself by adding food coloring to white glue. After a colored-glue design is dry, it is ready to be enhanced with marker outlines, patterns and more.

White glue-shapes and -lines (when dry) can be outlined and even colored over with markers, too. Then decorate the spaces around them as well. Metallic markers are especially striking.

Who knew you could speak the language of flowers with glue?

POINTILLISM--LOTS A DOTS!

For Artists in Full Bloom

More Than an Hour

Seeing spots before your eyes? Comic books and funny papers are *dot matrix* pictures. The tiny dots are hard to see and are very close together. In much the same manner, with this project we'll use many particles to create a picture. The art style using such dabs, dots, and specks of color is called *Pointillism*.

Usually no lines are used in Pointillism, but we'll begin with a light pencil sketch on white paper. Use bold, simple shapes instead of small, fussy ones.

Now you're ready to go dotty! Use a black marker or felt pen to "outline" your shapes not with a solid line but *with dots*. This will help your subject "stand out" from the background later.

Next use colored markers to fill in your subject with dots, specks and spots. By dabbing certain colors next to each other, you'll create a color-mixing effect. For example, if you want a flower to have blue-green leaves, fill them with small blue dots and green dots, spaced very closely. The human eye "mixes" the two colors together.

Fill your entire background with dots, too, keeping it lighter than your main subject. Step back from your work occasionally and squint your eyes. Do any shapes blend in too much? Do some areas need to be made darker with more dots closer together? By this time you really are seeing spots before your eyes!

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